

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----062451 201416Z /43
P 201100Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1963

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 11255

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, PCAT, UR,US
SUBJECT: MENDELEVICH COMMENTS ON CAT RELATED SUBJECTS

REF: (A) STATE 125832, (B) MOSCOW 10750

SUMMARY: POL COUNSELOR'S ORAL STATEMENT TO MENDELEVICH
ON CAT RELATED MATTERS PRODUCES:

-- SOVIETREJECTION OF MANNER OF U.S. REJECTION OF SOVIET
PROPOSAL TO LIMIT ARMS TRANSFERS TO NEIGHBORS OF TWO
COUNTRIES, I.E., SOVIET PROPOSAL WAS DELIVERED IN
FRAMEWORK OF CONSULTATIONS AND MUST BE ANSWERED IN SAME
FRAMEWORK.

-- STATEMENT THAT PRAVDA MAY 11 ARTICLE WAS NOT DIRECTLY
RELATED TO HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS.

-- OPINION THAT SOVIET HANDLING OF "JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT"
WAS CORRECT AND NOT DISSIMILAR TO U.S. PRESS TREATMENT.
NONETHELESS, SAYS MENDELEVICH, SOVIET UNION FULLY ABIDES
BY TEXT AS AGREED IN HELSINKI.
MENDELEVICH ALSO ASKS ABOUT DATES FOR NEXT ROUND OF
TALKS ON INDIAN OCEAN AND ON CAT AND HIGHLIGHTS PROBLEM
OF SOVIET BRIEFINGS ON CAT FOR U.S. FRIENDS AND ALLIES

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AND VICE VERSA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MAY 19 POL COUNSELOR DELIVERED ORALLY TO
MENDELEVICH ALL POINTS IN REF A INSTRUCTIONS INCLUDING
POINT BY POINT REFERENCE TO CHANGES IN RUSSIAN TEXT OF
CAT "JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT" PER REF B.

2. MENDELEVICH RESPONDED AS FOLLOWS:

-- ON THE PROCEDURAL QUESTION OF THE U.S. REJECTION OF SOVIET PROPOSAL TO LIMIT ARMS TRANSFERS TO NEIGHBORS OF TWO COUNTRIES: STATEMENT DELIVERED BY POL COUNSELO
IS
UNUSUAL SINCE IT WAS NOT PRESENTED DURING THE COURSE OF CAT CONSULTATIONS. SUBJECTS RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATIONS MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED OR REFUSED IN SEPARATE CHANNELS. THE U.S. STATEMENT REPRESENTS AN ATTEMPT TO SEPARATE ONE PART OF THE CONSULTATIONS FROM THE WHOLE. BOTH SIDES HAVE THERE VIEWS ON SEPARATE ISSUES, OF COURSE, AND DURING THE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS THEY CAN DISCUSS THEM, BUT NOT OUTSIDE OF THE CONSULTATIONS. THUS THE STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR DOES NOT CHANGE THE FACT THAT THE PROPOSAL MADE IN HELSINKI BY THE SOVIET DELEGATION ON BEHALF OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT REMAINS ON THE AGENDA OF THE DISCUSSIONS.

-- ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE U.S. "REJECTION": AS A COMMENT, RATHER THAN AS AN ANSWER; THE REACTION OF THE U.S. SIDE IS NOT UNDERSTANDABLE. THE SOVIET PROPOSAL CONCERNED THE POSSIBILITY OF REFUSING TO SUPPLY ARMS BEYOND NORMAL NEEDS OF RECIPIENT STATES. WHILE THE U.S. SIDE CONSIDERS ITS SUPPLY OF ARMS TO NEIGHBORS OF THE SOVIET UNION TO BE AT A LEVEL WHICH DOES NOT EXCEED THEIR DEFENSE NEEDS, THIS IS

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A SUBJECT FOR ARGUMENT. AND THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY WE HAVE THESE CONSULTATIONS.

3. ON THE MAY 11 PRAVDA ARTICLE: THE CORRECT ADDRESS FOR THE U.S. QUESTIONS WOULD BE THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF PRAVDA, BUT THE QUESTION IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND CAN BE ANSWERED AS FOLLOWS:

-- VISHNEVSKIY IS A GOOD, QUALIFIED JOURNALIST. NONETHELESS, HIS ARTICLE DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE OPINION OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE RECENT CONFIDENTIAL CONSULTATIONS. INDEED NO MENTION WAS MADE IN THE ARTICLE OF THE CONSULTATIONS AND, THEREFORE, IT IS NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEM.

-- STILL THE ARTICLE DOES NOT DEVIATE FROM THE TENOR OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN HELSINKI AND CAN BE CONSIDERED JUSTIFIED. HOWEVER, THE CONTENT OF THE CONSULTATIONS IS ONE THING WHILE WHAT THE JOURNALISTS WRITE IS ANOTHER.

4. ON SOVIET HANDLING OF THE "JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT": THIS IS A "NATURAL" QUESTION. IN THE COURSE OF THE WORK IN

HELSINKI, GELB'S ATTENTION WAS REPEATEDLY DRAWN TO THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS DO NOT ACCEPT THE IDEA OF A BIG OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE - A POLITICAL DOCUMENT - COMING IN THE COURSE OF "CONSULTATIONS". "BUT," SAID MENDELEVICH, WE AGREED ON A TEXT FROM WHICH I DON'T DEVIATE ONE MILLIMETER." THE SOVIET PRESS CAN REARRANGE (PEREMESTIT') THE TEXT OF SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT JUST AS CAN THE WESTERN PRESS, E.G., THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE GAVE THE ANNOUNCEMENT ONE-FOURTH OF THE SPACE WHICH PRAVDA GAVE IT. (BELONOGOV, TAKING NOTES, USED GWERTZMAN'S ARTICLE IN NYT AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE.) STILL THIS IS NOT OF OFFICIAL CHARACTER THE SOVIET SIDE HAS NOT CHANGED THE TEXT WHICH HAS BEEN AGREED UPON.

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5. THE POL COUNSELOR THEN ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAD

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PUBLISHED OR DISTRIBUTED THE FULL TEXT ANYWHERE. MENDELEVICH SAID THAT HE "THOUGHT" THAT TASS HAD TRANSMITTED THE FULL TEXT, BUT THAT HE WAS NOT MAKING ANY CLAIMS IN THAT REGARD. HE NOTED THAT HODDING CARTER HAD READ THE WHOLE TEXT IN WASHINGTON AS AGREED, BUT HE THEN ASKED IF THE WHOLE TEXT HAD BEEN PUBLISHED IN ANY U.S. NEWSPAPER. POL COUNSELOR SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW, BUT THAT THE EMBASSY HAD DISTRIBUTED THE TEXT AROUND MOSCOW.

6. MENDELEVICH THEN RAISED TWO QUESTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

-- ON THE DATES FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS: HAS THE U.S. SIDE DECIDED WHICH OF THE DATES WHICH WERE SUGGESTED IN HELSINKI FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN (IO) AND ON CAT IT PREFERENCES? MENDELEVICH SAID THAT GELB HAD AGREED THAT AN ANSWER WOULD BE PROVIDED IN TWO WEEKS, I.E., AROUND MAY 20. HE ADDED THAT WHILE THE SOVIETS COULD WAIT FOR A DATE ON THE CAT ROUND, THEY WERE SURPRISED THAT THE U.S. SIDE HAD NOT FULFILLED ITS MONTH-OLD PROMISE TO DOBRYNIN TO PROVIDE DATES FOR THE IO TALKS "IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS." UNDER INSTRUCTIONS, DOBRYNIN HAD PROPOSED THE "THIRD TEN DAY PERIOD: IN MAY. MEANWHILE WARNKE AND GELB HAD BEEN IN MOSCOW, WITH SECRETARY VANCE AND GELB HAD TALKED TO THE SOVIETS IN HELSINKI, BUT THERE WAS NO WORD FROM THE US

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SIDE. IF THERE WERE PERSONAL REASONS FOR THE DELAY, I.E., IF THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS WERE TIED UP, THEN THE SOVIETS WOULD BE READY TO ACCEPT THESE REASONS, BUT OFFICIALLY THE SOVIETS WOULD LIKE A RESPONSE.

-- ON THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE CAT DISCUSSIONS: MENDELEVICH SAID THAT THIS WAS A MATTER OF "GREAT SIGNIFICANCE." THE TWO SIDES HAD AGREED THAT EACH WOULD PRIVATELY INFORM ITS OWN ALLIES AND FRIENDS OF THE CAT TALKS AND THE SOVIET SIDE HAD DONE THIS. WE MAKE NO COMPLAINT, HE SAID, AGAINST THE U.S. SIDE IN THIS REGARD AND WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE U.S. HAS ANY COMPLAINT AGAINST US. BUT, HE WENT ON, NOW THE ALLIES OF THE U.S. ARE COMING TO THE SOVIETS FOR BRIEFINGS. FOR EXAMPLE ON MAY 18 THE FRG EMBASSY TRADE COUNSELOR CAME TO MENDELEVICH TO TALK ABOUT THE "ARMS TRADE". MENDELEVICH COMPLAINED (SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORILY, GIVEN HIS PARA 3 COMMENTS) THAT THE TALKS DO NOT CONCERN THE ARMS TRADE, PER SE, BUT RATHER ARMS LIMITATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT SUCH CONVERSATIONS WITH THE ALLIES OF THE OTHER SIDE BE KEPT VERY BRIEF.

7. COMMENT: MENDELEVICH'S TOUGH RESPONSE TO U.S. REJECTION OF SOVIET PROPOSAL TO LIMIT ARMS TRANSFERS TO NEIGHBORS OF TWO COUNTRIES INDICATES THAT U.S. SIDE WILL HAVE TO KNOCK IT DOWN ONCE AGAIN DURING NEXT ROUND OF TALKS. MENDELEVICH CONCLUDED HIS OVERALL REMARKS BY REEMPHASIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS PREVIOUS COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE (A POSSIBLE INDICATION THAT HIS OWN PRESTIGE MIGHT SUFFER AS A RESULT OF A SUMMARY U.S. REJECTION OF THE FORMAL PROPOSAL OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT). WHETHER, WE DEVOTE ANY EFFORT TO REBUTTING

INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL DURING THE NEXT

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CAT ROUND, IS A MATTER WE SHOULD DECIDE SOLELY WITH REGARD TO OUR OWN INTERESTS. IT DOES APPEAR THAT SOVIET INTEREST LIES IN DRAGGING U.S. SIDE INTO USELESS DISCUSSION AND ARGUMENT (ALBEIT ON A "REGIONAL APPROACH" OVER AN ISSUE WHICH COULD ONLY GREATLY UPSET THOSE COUNTRIES ALONG THE SOVIET BORDER WHICH WOULD BE CONCERNED.

8. MENDELEVICH'S "EXPLANATION" OF PRAVDA TREATMENT OF "JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT" (AND OF MAY 11 VISHNEVSKIY ARTICLE, FOR THAT MATTER) IS DISENGENUOUS, BUT EXPECTED. NONETHELESS, WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP HAMMERING AWAY AT SUCH EXAMPLES OF SOVIET TENDENTIOUSNESS.

9. MENDELEVICH MADE A BIG POINT OF THE LACK OF A U.S. RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET SUGGESTION FOR AN IO TALKS DATE. ALTHOUGH HE DENIED IN ADVANCE THAT HIS QUESTION HAD ANY POLITICAL MOTIVATION (SOVIET UNION, HE SAID, IS NO LESS INTERESTED THAN IS U.S. IN COMPLETION OF THESE TALKS), IT MAY BE THAT SOVIETS STILL HAVE IN MIND U.S. LINKAGE BETWEEN TALKS AND SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN HORN AND WOULD LIKE TO PUT THIS EPISODE BEHIND THEM . MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS, ARMS TRANSPORT RESTRICTIONS, ARMS CONTROL MEETINGS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW11255
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850070-2367
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780538/aaaabfpn.tel
Line Count: 252
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 806e179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 78 STATE 125832, 78 MOSCOW 10750
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2629277
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MENDELEVICH COMMENTS ON CAT RELATED SUBJECTS
TAGS: PARM, PCAT, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/806e179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014